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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 001181

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [ES](#) [TRAFFICKING](#) [IN](#) [PERSONS](#)

SUBJECT: SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT UNVEILS TIP VICTIMS SHELTER

Classified By: DCM Michael Butler. Reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (U) On the margins of the Regional Migration Conference being hosted by the Government of El Salvador (GOES), Minister of Governance Rene Figueroa announced at a May 3 press conference the unveiling of a GOES shelter for trafficking in persons victims. Figueroa stated that the shelter opening gave evidence of the GOES commitment to work with the international community to protect trafficking victims. According to the GOES, trafficking victims will heretofore receive housing and medical, psychological, and legal assistance at the shelter. The GOES has created an inter-agency commission, composed of high-ranking officials from the National Police (PNC), Salvadoran Institute for the Care of Children and Adolescents (ISNA), Salvadoran Institute for Women (ISDEM), and Office of Migration, to oversee the shelter as well as all issues relating to trafficking victims.

¶2. (SBU) On April 26, Director of Migration Jorge Santivanez gave Polcouns a tour of the new shelter. The shelter is very spacious, with clean, newly furnished rooms capable of housing up to 20 individuals, a clinic, and ample recreational areas, including a small library. The recently-hired professional staff, including a social worker and psychologist were present during the tour, and expressed enthusiasm concerning the facility and its mission. They stated that the shelter would be receiving its first three victims in the next few days. These victims are underage Nicaraguan girls who had been trafficked for prostitution in El Salvador by Guatemalan traffickers, and would be testifying against the traffickers. Santivanez and the shelter staff expressed great appreciation to the USG for funding the furnishings and equipment in the shelter.

¶3. (C) Comment: Minister of Governance Figueroa has expressed to Polcouns that he realizes the GOES has to make greater efforts to fight trafficking in persons, including aggressive prosecution of traffickers. Emboffs made sure that he and other GOES high-ranking officials read the TIP report and took it to heart. The opening of this shelter is one indication that the message is being received.

Barclay